

So, What Is A Mother?

In memory of Patricia Jane Freeman (Miller)

03/24/1933-02/15/2021

Nearly 88 Years Young

My mother, Patricia Jane Miller (maiden name Freeman), passed away today at approximately 12:50pm, February 15, 2021. Knowing her passing was inevitable the past few days I began drafting these memories of her. Thanks to all the dictated restrictions this past year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been very hard for many people to travel, to visit relatives, to support those in their hours of need, or to otherwise lead normal lives. The same may be said for memorials for those we love. Thus, grasping at straws, I decided on this vehicle to share my thoughts in a more timely manner. May she rest in peace...

Life begins *in the beginning*. Every one of us (so far) begins our lives within our mother's womb. If all goes well, the lucky among us ends up having a soulmate, which is our "mom". Having found an acceptable partner also, our father, she opened herself up to the risks of conception. Starting out as nothing more than a parasite, as her offspring, her prodigy, she allowed us to take shape within and she carried us forth; if she was so inclined. She gave birth to us; no matter how frightening or painful the labor of her love might have been.

She was a female, raised to become a woman and to be brave. And so she was; which made her special, indeed. My mother was very special, for sure; cunning, wise, loving, intelligent, spirited, and always strong.

Thinking back now, 67 years later, after mom delivered ME into this world, I ponder the days gone by... and what mom sacrificed for me.

She held me close and offered me her breast for my first meals. She prepared and fed me, and us, many more meals, for years to come. Some of her dinners were cooked on the fly, in small houses that we lived in; thrown together during times when raising us kids, no doubt, wore her down. Others were huge feasts, composed of more delightful dishes than anyone might hope for; turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy, fruit salad, vegetables, pies and everything in between. Feeding me, and feeding us, was just one way she shared and expressed her love.

Mom bathed me and nurtured me and taught me the many ways of the world. She was a hunter, gatherer, and shopper also. Every school year mom and dad found a way to supply us with enough clothes to protect our bodies from the elements; as they sent us on our way to learn what we could learn. Girls will be girls; and boys will be boys. If I came home with grass stains on the knees of my jeans, MOM knew how to wash them off. If I came home with holes in my pants, she knew how to patch them over. If I came home with a wound on a finger, my arm, my leg, my face, or a knot on my noggin, SHE was the best nurse in town. Mom would patch me up and send me on my way once again. An ear ache, a bee sting, a stubbed toe, a bloody nose, a black eye, the chicken pox, the flu, a cold, or a fever; she was always there to comfort me and make sure I survived to learn and play another day.

Sometimes I'd come home with a broken bone, or I'd blown my bloody fingers up with a firecracker, or I'd sunburned myself some other way. If mom couldn't always fix my mistakes she knew a good doctor who could. Rarely asking others to watch over us, she was there for me, always.

Fathers make good coaches; and they know how to lay down the law. But mom was no pushover either. If someone threatened me, and she was there to see it, she never hesitated to come to the rescue. Often, when I was on the field of battle at a baseball game, a football game, or some other competitive event, I could gaze into the crowd and she would usually be there to cheer me onward. She was my score keeper. She was my fan. She was my guiding angel. She was my mom.

There are times you never forget in your life. Many of those times are memories of mom.

She could whip us at Chinese checkers or ping pong. She played a good game of pinochle and knew a few things about rolling a bowling ball too. She was the life of most parties and could dance with the best of them. She was more attractive than all the other gals around town; at least in my eyes. She was a hard worker, a great homemaker and a class act; all rolled into one. She was a best friend.

I remember the time I pulled out one of my baby teeth right before it was time to climb up into the top bunk of my bed for the night. Mom said, "Let's put your tooth under the pillow and see if the Tooth Ferry comes to get it..." just like so many times before. She tucked me in, gave me a kiss, and left the room. Ten or fifteen minutes went by. As I began to get drowsy I thought I better check and make sure my tooth was still there. It was gone! Instead I found a shiny new half dollar. "MOM!!" She came running back in, "What's wrong?" "You tricked me! There's no Tooth Ferry? You did it, didn't you?" She smiled, "I guess Tooth Ferries have lots of helpers." She gave me another kiss. "I LOVE YOU MOM!!" I figured from that day on she was Mrs. Santa too.

I also recall another time I had to have my appendix removed; I was in 4th grade. I had my tonsils removed before that too (mom made sure there was plenty of J E L L O for me to eat that time). But this time I was older and I wasn't so sure I wanted anyone cutting my stomach open. But mom told me, "It will be OK." That's all I needed to hear.

A day or so later she was there with me in my hospital room when the doctor explained it was time for me to start getting out of bed and to try to take short walks and see how it goes. I didn't want to. "Mom, let's play a game of checkers." "If you want to play checkers you have to take a walk, like the doctor said, first." "It will hurt too much," I told her. "Well, then I guess I'll have to tell you a joke." Somehow she told me a joke that was extra funny. I started to laugh so hard it was killing my stomach. The stitches felt like they were going to come apart. I jumped out of bed, grabbed my stomach and took off down the hall, still laughing away. Finally, I calmed down and managed to walk back into the room. "Mom. No more jokes. It hurts too much." She wrapped her arms around me, gave me a BIG hug, and said, "I'm sorry Chuck. I love you!" Then she smiled and said, "OK. Let's play some checkers."

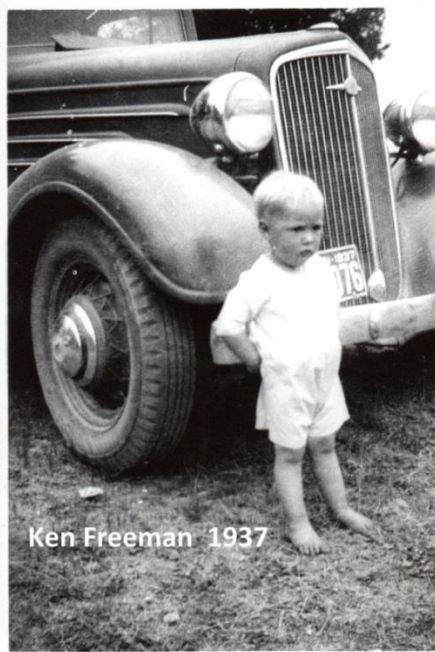
As always, I could go on and on. Stories of mothers, like mom, are never ending; even though they say all GOOD things must come to an end.

67 lovable years later... Mom has passed away. Memories will grow dim. Words can never express it all. Mom lived a pretty wonderful life. There were ups, there were downs, good times and hard. She did her

BEST. She gave us life... and support... so we could do our best too. She made sure we all shared in what SHE had to offer. Nobody could ask for anything more. Nothing will bring mom back. But, remember always, she is still here, inside us all.

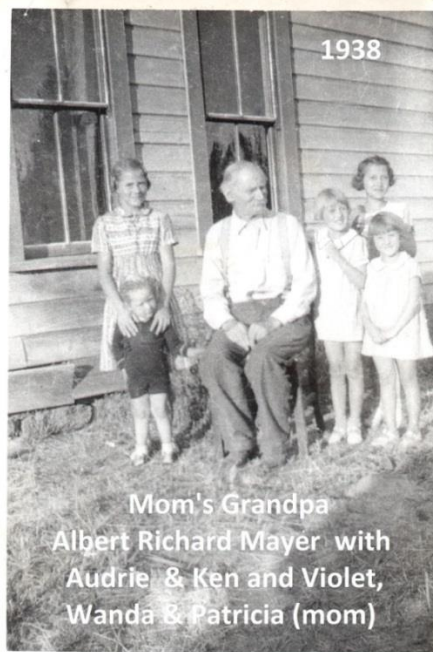
So, what is a Grandmother? Well, she's a mother on steroids.

"Being a mother means getting to see all the possibilities in the world through your children's eyes, and also wanting to be the kindest and most generous version of yourself, so that your children can look up to you. On a day to day level, being a mother means being tired, sometimes grumpy, but never left alone, and then, in one funny, loving or meaningful moment with your kids, realizing that it's all completely worth it, times a million."



Ken Freeman 1937

KEN 2 1/2



Mom's Grandpa
Albert Richard Mayer with
Audrie & Ken and Violet,
Wanda & Patricia (mom)

My father + children



Pat, Wanda, Violet and Audrie





Wanda 1950



1951
Patricia Freeman



Mo & Chuck 1954

Mom made great
birthday cakes too - 1956





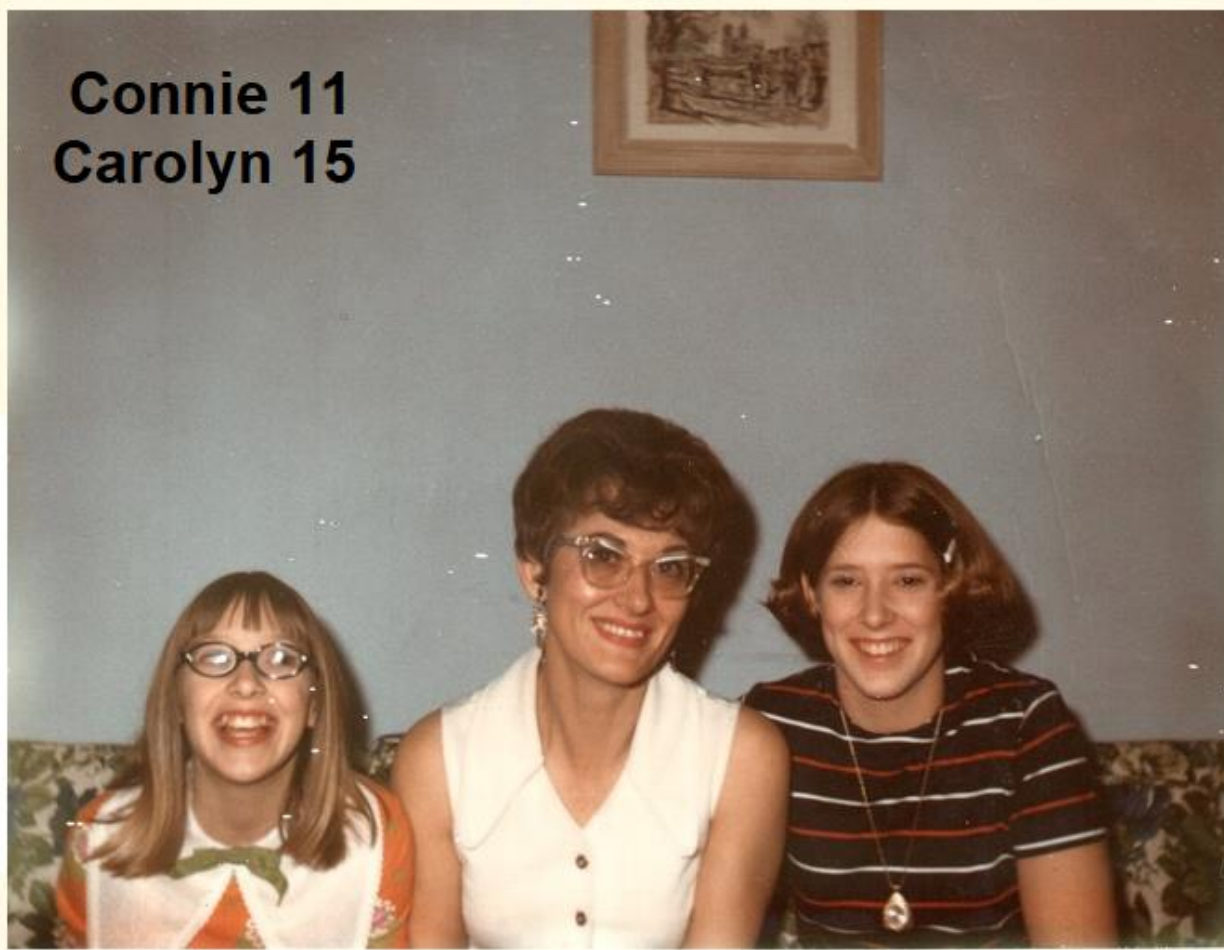


Dick, Wanda, Kent Best & Angie w/ Kendra
Me w/ Carolyn & Connie 1963
7 yrs 3 yrs



1968

Connie 11
Carolyn 15





1978
 Ray, Pat Miller, w daughter
 Connie + Killa dog
 Stone rd. Bowling Or.



Dick Day, Daddy, Audrey +
 Wanda



Our Father, Coy Freeman
 Visits us 1979
 Audrey, Patricia, Wanda



Halloween Party
Connie + Mark
1982

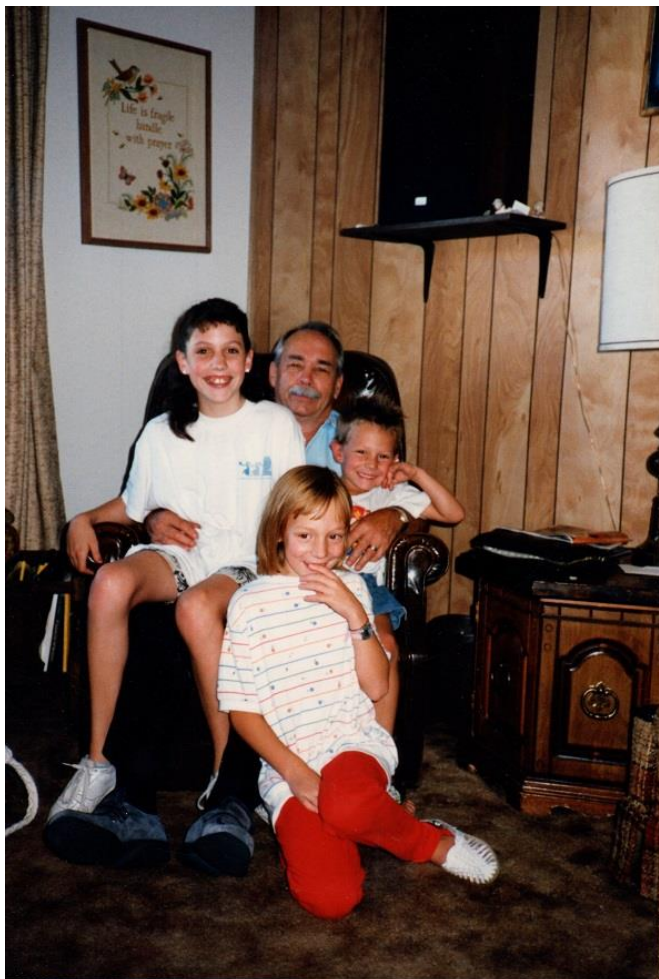


Pat Miller Halloween



Chuck, Jason + Darryn Xmas
1982

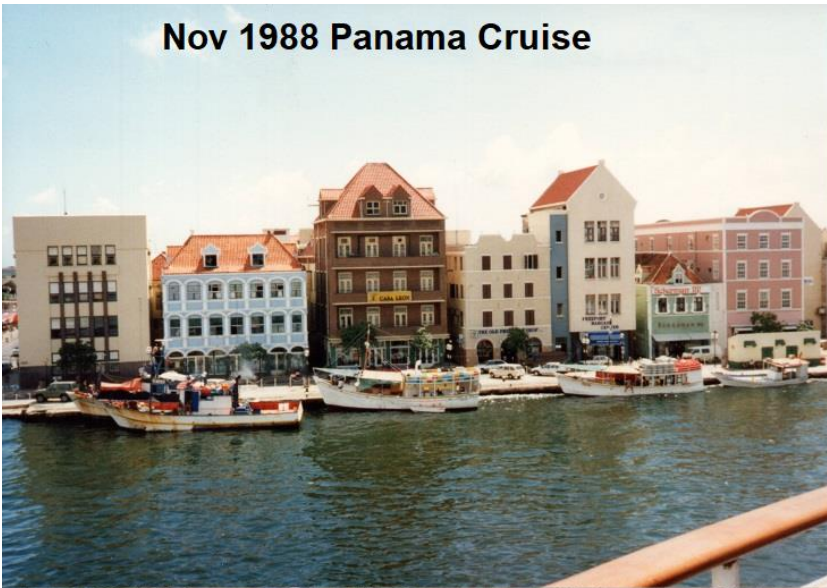




**Ray, Pat, Ray Jr., Holly,
April, Chrissy, Terah,
Jon, Allison... and a dog**

1987

Nov 1988 Panama Cruise



Curacoa Dutch Isle, 300 yo house St Croix, Ron & Jeff, outdoor market, etc.





Leavenworth, WA with Marsha Zink





Puerto Vallarta

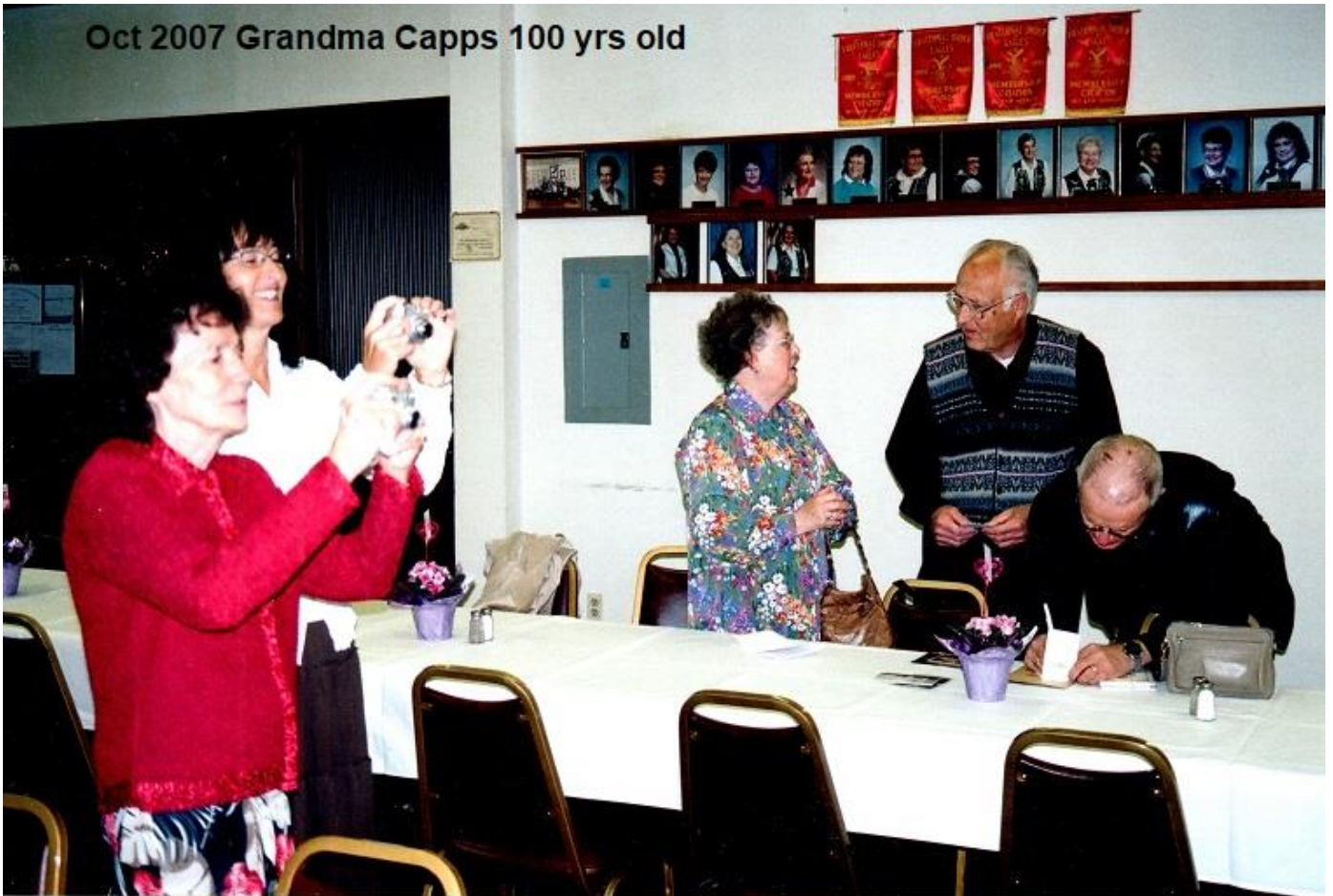


1998

2001



Oct 2007 Grandma Capps 100 yrs old





Uncle Ken Freeman memorial services
July 18 & 19, 2012





















Footnote: Last time I saw mom was via Facetime; Feb 10, 2021.